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Judiciary Committee

Legislative Office Building, Room 2500

Hartford, CT 06106

Sent via email

Dear Judiciary Committee Members,

My name is Joseph Scully, of Branford, CT, CCDL member, and member of the Branford Sportsman's Club. I am very active with civic groups, politics and am a registered voter and proud to live in this great state. I am also a long-time firearms instructor, have taught in multiple states over the years, in multiple areas and disciplines. For ten years I was certified by the Mass State Police to provide firearms Instruction. Over the years particular focus of instruction has been for women and people with a variety of physical disabilities for the purpose of lawful self defense and target shooting.

I am a career public safety worker, proudly serving the citizens as a Paramedic and in the past as a firefighter and firefighting Instructor. I have many citations for heroism, life saving etc. I come from a proud family of Law Enforcement. My father retired after over 30 years of service as a highly decorated Police Officer in Massachusetts. He famously has said he never in all his years ever witnessed a crime involving a legal, licensed gun owner. In fact to the contrary he had been assisted while in duress on occasions by lawfully armed citizens. He said he always breathed easier -often using discretion on traffic issues- when he realized he was talking to a permit holder because his words "they are the good guys". Like almost all police officers I know - he is to this day a fervent proponent for legal gun ownership.

Gun control laws do not stop crime and I am adamantly opposed to SB16 and HB5416. Even the touted Clinton Bill from the 1990s - later studied and found by the FBI to have had "no

appreciable effect on crime". Placing restrictions on law abiding citizens does not stop criminals – it in fact empowers and emboldens violent criminals. And puts domestic violence victims, women, and honest law abiding people in danger.

Gun Control is a failure, if it worked, we would not be back here every year asking for more laws -while crime increases and gets more violent. The fact that we are is an admission that everything up to now has not worked. Why do you keep doing things that have not worked- and have probably contributed to crime? Why not address the actual social issues – and control the criminals. Ninety percent of violent crime is committed by less than 5 percent of the population. Wouldn't it make sense to focus on them??

There is no such thing as Gun Violence per say, we have a huge Criminal Violence problem and instead of attacking law abiding citizens, you should be laser focused on crime and criminals. Seventy Percent- yes 70%- of criminals arrested in this state see their firearms related charges DROPPED. We don't even enforce existing laws!!

The "Other" firearms you seek to ban have NEVER been used in any criminal incident in this state. Nothing about them makes them more dangerous- its about color and cosmetic features- oddly. They in fact are hugely beneficial to the disabled, smaller stature individuals and women seeking to enjoy the shooting sports or maintain a firearm for self defense.

Limiting carrying in public places puts good people at risk as they will be helpless to defend themselves against bad people – against violent, evil people intent on causing harm who do not follow our laws. Criminals love gun free zones! Gun Free Zones have claimed more lives than they were intended to save, sadly. Criminals choose these places for their evil and that has proven sadly in actual events and in law enforcement interviews of criminals in prison. They know they will be unopposed in their evil actions in these zones. WE should be keeping felons and dangerous criminals in PRISON- not creating playgrounds for their evil acts.

Allowing Police to detain citizens and ask for their permits with no evidence of a crime being committed is unlawful, unnecessary, and designed for harassment by anti-gun groups. "Show me your papers" was a tactic used by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in Germany but has no place in CT. Law abiding folks openly carrying legal firearms are clearly not criminals. Sadly there have been a few law abiding folks who took opportunity to disrespect or cause legal issues for our police over the years to make a point about open carry and embarrass our great police– that is unfortunate, and reprehensible that they chose to make a statement that way.

Preventing bulk purchases of pistols is laughable, as criminals do not follow laws. And criminals are not able to and do not buy firearms at licensed gun shops. This would only affect legal gun owners from buying collections, transferring collections, seeking to legally transfer a deceased family members heirlooms, manage trusts and other legal activities. Straw purchases are already illegal and a federal felony so it would still be a crime.

Are you aware that the MOST law abiding among us are legal gun owners? In fact, MORE crimes and firearms accidents occur with Police officers than legal gun owners – a statistical fact. And that statistic is very shocking considering that Police officers are actually a very small part- less than 1 percent of our citizenry.

We support SB388, an act concerning defense, HB 5415 an act concerning legal transfer of assault weapons and magazines, and HB5412 an act concerning the duty to retreat in a house of worship. Folks should be able to sell their valuable property through legal dealers to other legal citizens. To do otherwise deprives them of the value of their private property in a way that should not occur in the state.

For years we have heard Democrats state “I support the 2nd Amendment but...” but the truth is by your actions - you don’t. For years Democrats have stated you are not coming after legal guns, but truth is you appear to be doing just that.

I support ANY AND ALL efforts or legislation that ACTUALLY helps our Police and stops criminals intent on evil. Nothing in these bills can or will have any effect on crime. They only seek to further hurt the rights of honest, hard working citizens. I have asked street officers I know personally and in my family and they STRONGLY agree that this thrown together legislation is not helpful in any way. Why do you not seek the input of actual Officers out there and of the law abiding citizenry? This proposed legislation is clearly a compilation of useless ideas from Anti- firearms groups masquerading as gun safety groups. They are nothing of the sort. This is a hodge-podge of illogical items clearly put together by very emotion biased, and un-influenced by facts - anti gun groups. Whose interests I would think should be public safety and controlling actual criminals.

This is an election year and anyone who votes in favor of further restrictions on law abiding citizens, handicapping our Police, and empowering criminals will see our effort to raise money for opposition candidates and VOTE YOU OUT OF OFFICE. Lets work TOGETHER to actually make real changes that will actually help reduce crime, keep our officers safe, and keep criminals in jail!! Many of us would be happy to sit down and discuss evidence

based ideas that would finally REALLY make a difference!!

Thank you very much for your time, efforts and service to the State,

Joseph A. Scully  
Branford, CT